(a) whether it is a fact that the availability of coal in the country is insufficient, which is adversely affecting the coal based small industries;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government would consider formulation of a national policy to ensure the availability of coal for all sectors?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA): (a) and (b) As per Annual Plan 2008-09, the all India coal demand is estimated to be 550 million tonnes and the total indigenous availability is estimated at 497.29 million tonnes. Therefore, there is a gap of 52.71 million tonnes which is proposed to be met by imports in the power and other sectors. Despite this position, during 2008-09, the Government is making all efforts to ensure that coal requirement for small industries is met to the extent possible. For this purpose, 8 million tonnes of coal has been exclusively earmarked during 2008-09 for distribution to small and medium industries, Whose annual requirement is less than 4200 tonnes per annum, through state nominated agencies. Further, such consumers can also source their requirement through e-auction. CIL has already offered about 61 million tonnes of coal through e-auction during April-November, 2008.

(c) In view of observations and directions of Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of M/s. Ashoka Smokeless Coal India Pvt. Limited and Ors. *Vs* Union of India and Ors. Government had constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Secretary (Coal) to give recommendations on a coal distribution policy. Based on the recommendations of this Committee, Government approved the New Coal Distribution Policy in October, 2007. The said policy envisages providing coal to all genuine consumers of all the sectors in a transparent and commercially enforceable manner.

Underground fire in Jharia coalfields

1094. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the underground fires in Jharia coalfields;

(b) if so, whether due to underground fires in Jharia coalfields a large number of families living at Dhanbad Raniganj have been displaced;

(c) if so, whether Government has taken any steps to check the spread of underground fires and to provide help to the affected families; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. As per Master Plan for Jharia Coal field dealing with fire, rehabilitation of people from endangered areas and diversion of surface infrastructure in the leasehold of Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) updated in July, 2006, 98314 houses from 595 sites due to fire and

subsidence are to be rehabilitated to safer places outside of the coalfield *i.e.* non-coal bearing areas. Of the total of 98314 houses, 44155 houses are those of BCCL employees, 29444 houses are of private authorized people and another 23847 houses are unauthorized/encroachers and another 868 houses belong to others.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Adequate efforts have been made by BCCL, in this direction under which BCCL started an all round effort to combat the fires. Due to this effort, liquidation of 10 fires was possible and the remaining 67 fires are by and large under control. The surface area under fire has reduced to 9 sq. km (as per Master Plan updated in August, 2006) from 17 sq. km (in the year 1986).

Action taken for fire control:

To prevent/control fire and subsidence following technologies/practices have been adopted through various Environmental Measures and Subsidence Control (EMSC)/ Rehabilitation and Control of Fire and Subsidence (RCFS)/Fire Schemes:-

(i) Surface sealing and blanketing

(ii) Isolation by trenching and back filling with cohesive soil.

(iii) Filling of opencast high wall, shafts, inclines and other subsided areas

(iv) Blind flushing with sand/cement/fly-ash/grout mixture

(v) Cooling by waste curtain/infiltration ponds.

Since 1997-98, various Environmental Measure and Subsidence Control (EMSC) Schemes and Rehabilitation and Control of Fire and Subsidence (RCFS) schemes were sanctioned for a total outlay of about Rs. 101.45 crores. Out of this

(a) Eight EMSC Schemes were completed with expenditure of Rs.5.73 crores.

(b) Five EMSC schemes are continuing and till date Rs. 25.98 crores has been spent.

(c) Four RCFS schemes in which Rs.5.76 cores has been spent.

(d) Five nos. of schemes under Master Plan to deal with fire is going on and total expenditure of Rs. 6.64 crores was incurred till date.

CTL technology

1095. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether with global crude prices shooting through the roof, corporate are making a beeline to exploit India's vast reserves of black diamond for producing liquid gold through CTL (Coal to liquid) technology;

(b) if so, whether a company has told his Ministry that it planned to pump Rs. 32,000 crore into such a project for extracting 80,000 bpd (barrel per day) of oil by synthesizing coal;